

A White Paper by
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How to Increase Employee Performance in 7 Steps

Adapted from Profiles International

Every business, despite best efforts in recruiting, hiring, and motivating employees, eventually faces the problem of low performers. Tasks get done but seldom on time. Absenteeism and tardiness creep up. As the manager, you wish people like this would just disappear, but it seems they never do. They just seem to hang on and on. In some circles this is labeled “presenteeism” and having these low performers at work may be costing you more than if you paid them to stay home! Top performers, saddled with the extra load of carrying dead weight, may simply choose to move on. What can you do, then, to solve this dilemma? Behold, a gift to managers everywhere!

7 Steps for Increasing a Low Performer’s Pace:

1. Identify the problem in clear terms.

If you’ve been meaning to set performance standards for each job in your area, now is the time. Attendance, timeliness, positive attitude, and quality of work become part of a set of measurable performance standards for employees. An indispensable web resource for defining the skills and qualities needed for a specific job can be found at: www.onet.net

2. Communicate. Meet with your low performers, lay out the expectations, and point out the places where performance regularly falls short. Communicate directly what the specific expectations are for future performance.

3. Follow Through. Make it clear these expectations will be tracked and frequently evaluated. Then do just that—make the consequences of failing to meet these goals clear and enforceable. A sure way to lose credibility as a manager is to forget about this step. Without enforceable consequences, low performing employees will not take you or your expectations seriously.

4. Provide Coaching. Beyond telling an employee to improve, you must show them how. The Profiles International PXT assessment with its detailed Coaching Report is well known for helping managers effectively coach their employees to greater productivity.

5. Document. While your fondest hope may be to see your employees improve their

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performance, it’s likely you are simply documenting the path to the door. Keep

detailed records with accurate dates, documenting the specific performance issues of your employee. These records are mandatory if removal is necessary. They’re also a great tool for timely feedback, which is the only effective and fair kind.

6. Hire Slowly. Fire Quickly. One successful manager said, “The most expensive time an employee is on my payroll is the interval between when I decide to fire them and when they go out the door.” Because firing someone, especially someone who has been with the business for a long time, is painful, you may find yourself procrastinating. Your delay at this stage can only compound the damage. Following Jack Welch’s advice to remove the bottom 10 percent of employees each year is not an easy path, and you will most likely differ with this cutthroat approach. But to ignore a consistently low-performing employee is to ensure your operations will never be as good as they could be - or as profitable.

7. Hire Wisely. Of course, when it is time to hire a new employee, we would all like to avoid replicating the departed one! This is the opportunity to use a well-structured hiring process, information from assessments, background checks and other valid information you can gather to add a top performer to your business. Studies have shown top performers, in nearly any business, will out-produce low performers by anywhere from 200-to-900 percent! Imagine the effect on your organization, if you could replace one low performer with one top performer. Then, imagine you did it again and again... The good news: You can!